

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of representing users on a display device in a telecommunications conferencing facility by means of animated graphical representations corresponding to the respective users, wherein the users are depicted as carrying out symbolic animated actions, relating to the various events taking place during the virtual telecommunications conferencing process, each user being presented with a view of a respective virtual space in which the other users and their activities are represented by means of graphical representations, the virtual space being viewed from a respective viewpoint, and relative positions and relative movements of the other users in the virtual space being selected according to the respective viewpoint of the user,

wherein for each user the representations of each of the other users are arranged such that they are all contained within the field of view of the user's display device and accessing of a facility by one user for viewing by other users is represented in a different manner for the viewing users and the accessing user, and

wherein a relative positional order of said animated graphical representatives depicted in said virtual space for each user remains constant and the angular separation of said animated graphical representations depicted in said virtual space is not constant.

Claim 2 (Canceled).

3. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 1, 2, in which the symbolic actions are selected such that they take place within a fixed field of view.

Claim 4 (Canceled).

5. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 1 wherein users not currently actively engaged in the telecommunications conference are represented in a different manner from those currently viewing the conference.

6. (Currently Amended) Telecommunications conferencing system comprising:

display control means for representing users on display devices by means of animated graphical representations corresponding to the respective users, the display control means being arranged to depict animated symbolic actions carried out by the users, relating to the various events taking place during the virtual telecommunications conferencing process, each user being presented with a view of a respective virtual space from a viewpoint representative of the position of that user in the virtual space and for presenting, to the user a representation of the other users and their activities;

wherein the display control means represents the presence and activities of each other user by means of symbolic positions and animations such that in the respective virtual space the representations of each of the other users are respective relative positions according to the viewpoint of the user in the space and the display control means is arranged to represent, for each user each of the other users such that they are all subtended within the field of view of the display device of that user; and

means for accessing a facility by one user for viewing by other users wherein the accessed facility is represented in a different manner for the viewing users and the accessing user;

wherein the relative positional order of said animated graphical representations depicted in said virtual space for each conferee remains constant and the angular separation between said animated graphical representations depicted in said virtual space is not constant.

Claim 7 (Canceled).

8. (Currently Amended) Conferencing system as in claim 6, 7, in which the symbolic actions are selected such that they take place within a fixed field of view.

Claim 9 (Canceled).

10. (Previously Presented) Conferencing system as in claim 6 wherein the display control means is arranged to represent users not currently actively engaged in the telecommunications conference in a different manner from those currently viewing the conference.

11. (Previously Presented) System as in claim 6 comprising client means associated with each user for generating at least part of the user's viewpoint.

12. (Previously Presented) System as in claim 6 comprising server means accessible by each user for generating at least part of the users' viewpoints.

Claim 13 (Canceled).

14. (Currently Amended) A ~~virtual conferencing method~~ as in claim 1 ~~13~~

wherein:

said animated graphical representations ~~said conferee icons~~ are animated to represent different symbolic animated actions if any such action is currently associated with a respective conferee.

15. (Currently Amended) A ~~virtual conferencing method~~ as in claim 14

wherein:

said symbolic animated actions include actions indicating a desire to conclude the conference.

Claims 16-22 (Canceled).